**Innovation Platforms and Technology parks in Mali**

**Africa Research in Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING)**

**Workshop Report**

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**Workshop Report**

**Koutiala - Bougouni, Mali**

**19th and 21st May 2015**

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**Organized by**

**World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)**

**International Crops Research Institute for the Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)**

**Association Malienne d’Eveil au Développement Durable (AMEDD)**

**Mouvement Biologique Malien (MOBIOM)**

**Funded by**

**Africa RISING program in Mali**

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# Background

Africa Research in Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING) is a five year collaborative project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) implemented in Africa including Ghana and Mali from West Africa. In Mali, the project is led by ICRISAT and implemented by a consortium of partners including ICRAF, AVRDC and IRLI and national partners IER, AMEDD, MOBIOM, AMASSA, CAAD and GRADCOM.

According to the workplan of the project in 2014, two innovation platforms (IP) were established in Koutiala and Bougouni at district level in Mali bringing together all local stakeholders to promote the uptake of sustainable intensification of cereal-based farming system innovations in the Sudano-Sahelian zone. Agricultural intensification requires interactions between key players in agricultural development. These key players are the leaders in farmers' organizations and their unions in the public and target circles, support structures: agriculture, local social development department, NGOs and other stakeholders. **In Koutiala the innovation platform established was named as ‘Siguida Blomba’ while in Bougouni it was called 'Djekafo kene'**.

The present report summarizes the interactive discussions during the workshops held in Koutiala on May 19, 2015 and Bougouni on May 21, 2015 organized jointly by ICRAF and the local NGO AMEDD for the launching of both, the innovation platforms and the technology parks. The technology parks in Mpessoba (Koutiala district) and also in Flola (Bougouni district) have been visited by IP members during the official reception ceremony

# Koutiala workshop

## Opening session

**Date:** Tuesday 19th May 2015 **Venue:** Koutiala Catholic Mission **Innovation platform**: Siguida Blomba

**Agenda:**

1. Planning and presentation of implemented activities for the coming season 2015
2. IP members discussion and interaction
3. Inauguration of the Technology Park in M’pessoba

The workshop started with the welcoming remarks from the Director of AMEDD, Mr. Bougouna Sogoba. He welcomed all participants and advises all to properly participate to the session as innovation platform is a framework for exchanging information.

After the welcome word of the director of AMEDD, the agenda of the day was presented by Mr. Arouna Bayoko from AMEDD. Then after oral presentation were made by members of the IP and scientists from participating institutes.

## Presentations

**Presentation of innovation platform:**

The first presentation was done by Arouna Bayoko about the innovation platform of Koutiala named ‘Siguida Blomba’. The presentation was about reminder of decisions taken during the previous meetings of Siguida Blomba (expectations, risks…) and reminder work plan that was predefined for the implementation of the activities in 2015.

**Presentation of the research program with research institutions**

**ICRISAT:**

Dr Birhanu Zemadim highlighted the overall objective of Africa RISING program and field level implementation programs. He informed participants that Africa RISING is a 5 year research project implemented in the villages of Koutiala and Bougouni circles with the involvement of local NGOs and government institution, IER. Five (5) villages were selected for implementation plan. He told participants that the program has five components. The socioeconomic analysis is the first component that also includes the Innovation Platform.

About the management of natural resources and water, a wider study was conducted with the input of AMEDD and understood that the establishment of stone/soil bunds have been effective means of retaining water in farm fields. Evidence was shown by the contribution of this technology to improve productivity in Kani village, a dry land system project site .

In his concluding remark Dr. Birhanu stressed that Africa RISING should draw examples of success stories to facilitate the mobilization of resources in the context of future projects. To finish with his presentation he presented to participants Mr. Karamoko Traore who will be Africa RISING site coordinator for Koutiala district based in AMEDD office. And Mr. Mahamodou Dicko will be Africa RISING site coordinator in Bougouni district based in MoBioM office.

**ICRAF**

The activities related to agroforestry were presented by Dr Catherine Dembele that also included the nutrition benefit of trees and their contribution to staple food (sorghum, millet and maize). Tree products are used as vegetables (food bank concept), food, fodder, medicine etc. The example of baobab bringing more nutrient and vitamins than mango and orange was discussed. Grafting allows shortening the juvenile life time before fruit production for important tree species indigenous to the Sahel such as baobab, shea, tamarind and jujube. ICRAF has disseminated these technologies to contribute to the diet of women and children. About ten (10) improved varieties were planted by ICRAF in the 10 villages of Africa RISING. ICRAF makes the selection of species based on their natural assets or already improved cultivars and then performed grafting for more productivity based on expected benefits. ICRAF will conduct training farmers to grafting techniques to allow them to be familiarize with the techniques for more efficiency.

In the proposed technology parks, all these species will be planted and farmers will receive useful training. ICRAF wants to encourage the production of baobab leaves and moringa as fresh vegetable during dry season. Planting trees in the fields also contributes to soil and water conservation in the fields. Three species are chosen and will be disseminated by ICRAF for this purpose (Acacia colei, Gliricidia sepium and Piliostigma reticulatum).

**AVRDC**

Dr Albert Rouamba is the presenter of AVRDC’s activities. The intercropping in the rainy season and dry season activities include cereals-chili, cereals-tomato, cereals-okra. The aim is to know the most profitable and most productive combination. In the cold season, culture was just pure without combination to define a comparison with the associated crops.

In 2015, there will be testing of intercropping and capacity building will be conducted in the 10 intervention villages. It will take into account the access to the market for different productions, so the periods will be targeted in this framework. Production of early maturing will be disseminated. The capacity building will be an activity to increase the level of producers through training by the integrated control for example and post-harvesting technologies. There will be diploma courses for two students (one in Koutiala and one in Bougouni). The overall objective is to study the net profits of vegetable production.

**Farmers: experiences**

Joseph Dembele expressed his views that he is very happy to participate in the meeting and thanked AMEDD for the local support. He began his activities by the production of cereals and legumes and the fight against Striga. He has benefited from a lot of training. The vegetables production was also included in the training and he is the trainer for other farmers in his village.

Dramane Dembele working with ICRAF and knows all varieties and species disseminated by ICRAF like tamarind, baobab and jujube. He expressed that for the success of any activity there must be a voluntary farmer and a love of work that led him to be a real model in his community because he was really motivated and maintained trees until fruit tree production. According to him training is more useful than aid.

Oumar Keita (Zanzoni) is a leading producer of grafted tamarind. The biggest problem remains the availability of water for the seedlings. The support of ICRAF and AMEDD motivates more farmers to produce.

**Participatory varietal selection and nutrition**

Mr. Pierre Coulibaly from AMED discussed the participatory varietal selection initiated by ICRISAT and AVRDC and executed by AMEDD and AMASSA in Koutiala districts. He stressed that a consultation program at village level is required to know the expectations in relation to the nutrition of women and children. Training courses are regularly organized in relation to the nutrition of children and pregnant women.

**Local conventions in natural’s resource management**

Mr. Siaka Coulibaly fromAMEDD informed participants that ILRI with the help of AMEDD conducted a study on local conventions and availability of feed resources. Regarding social cohesion, mediations were opened between farmers and breeders. The notion of the livestock corridors has also been debated. With the non-existence of the texts it was suggested to have elaboration (local agreement) with the involvement of municipal authorities and traditional leaders and all populations in inclusive way (over 300 participants). The livestock paths were defined as part of corridor 10 km in each village.

Discussion

**Participants' questions and debate on different presentations of research institutions:**

Dr Rouamba: Does the innovation platform has an internal rules? What is the resource mobilization strategy? How is the return of information to the farmer’s level?

El Hadj Moussa Traore: the problem of farmer participation in restitution meetings in the different organization and village. Is there a leaflet or support of presentations to facilitate the understanding and restitution? What is the impact of the training of 60 people in nutrition?

Souleymane Dao: more details need to be done on the integration of agriculture with livestock? What grain AVRDC speaks in terms of culture association? What is the response of ICRAF in relation to the problem of water in the area?

Participant: How farmer’s organizations can have access to the research results of ICRISAT?

Ousmane Coulibaly from AMEDD: Durability of studies about profitability by AVRDC?

A farmer asks if he can have a better baobab variety that does not yellowed.

Mr. Dicko proposes to increase the number of participants in each village during meetings.

Dramane Dembele: The land problem for tree planting and tree maintenance.

Lamine Traore need clarification about market study done by AVRDC and also clarification about the local agreement convention conducted by ILRI.

**Answers to questions and suggestion**

After thorough discussion by IP members the following concluding remarks were made for the questions raised.

* There is a guiding principle to for the innovation platform.
* The municipal structures should get involved in the IP meetings
* We need the IP to show some dynamism to attract all actors that can contribute to agricultural development
* There shouldn’t be any form of payment by IP members.
* Innovation platform unites all actors, producers, technicians and researchers for exchanges of ideas. It is difficult to ask participants a financial contribution from the onset. The question is how the innovation platform will work at the end of the project? The goal is that the innovation platform must exist beyond the project. This requires that each actor knows his role and see the advantages derived from the innovation platform.
* Innovation platform is not the ownership of the project and must be integrate into the national system and allow other partners and projects to use it for their activities.
* An example from a participant who received training about nutrition helped to illustrate the importance of nutrition training in nutrition of children under five years.
* The livestock pathway necessarily needs a consultation of the entire community for its applicability. The media are involved in the activities and the next step is the restitution, validation, and signature of the local convention.
* The most profitable vegetable association was Corn-Roselle in market value. The development of technology is needed in development at beyond the hype that often leads to overproduction and a decline in profitability. However AVRDC does not do market research.
* Dramane Dembele explains that when the shea is well protected and maintained, it shortened the 20-year maturation process often only 10 years. Each participant from farmer organization is charged to make the restitution at community level where he/she is the responsible.
* The problem of water is recurrent in the Sahel. We must take advantage of each project for the establishment of at least one well in each village. Comparing approach based on private or individual motivation, community approach is advocated for demonstration, in case of individual need, farmers are invited to express their need and they will be supported. The example of the baobab tree which leaves were always green needs to be investigated whether there is a genetic advantage or because of a specific environment (presence of sufficient water for example). Demonstration of the grafting technology that allows the young plants to produce faster by association with an older plant will be evaluated along with farmers. Fallows are usefull for natural regeneration of shea regenerate because they allow young seedlings to grow to sapling stage before new fallow field establishment.
* The implementation of the Platform need a basic work to identify all potential farmer organizations member of the innovation platform before inviting them at the training and launch meeting.
* Dr Birhanu Zemadim: The crop-livestock integration aspect was not done so far however considering its importance we have included in the current work plan.
* One participant suggested only identify farmers interested by technology instead of making a deal for communities because management by community isn’t easy.
* To protect trees against termites, the use of bone helps attract ants that deters the presence of termites (technological innovation at the fair in Ouagadougou presented by the team of Ghana).

## Inauguration of the technology park in Koutiala district

**Principle and Management of the Technology Park (TP)**

Dr. Birhanu made a brief presentation about the technology park as follows:

A TP is a community based experimental station consisting of a series of replicated and un-replicated experiments (‘Mother trials’).

Two TPs were constructed: Flola Village in Bougouni and M’Pessoba Village in Koutiala district. Uses of TP are as follows :

* Evaluate and demonstrate new technology
* Provide hands-on training for farmers
* Facilitate knowledge flow among farmers
* Train under/graduate students
* Determine farmer preferences for technologies

The scaling out strategy using the TP is presented in the following tables for each TP.

Table 1 : Bougouni District

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Village** | **Farmers trained in the TP (ToT)** | **Farmers trained by the ToT** | **Total** |
| Flola (TP) | 10 | 15 | 150 |
| Dieba | 5 | 10 | 50 |
| Sibirila | 5 | 10 | 50 |
| Madina | 5 | 10 | 50 |
| Yorobougoula | 5 | 10 | 50 |
| Sub total | 30 |  | 350 |
| Grand Total | 380 | | |

Table 2: Koutiala District

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Village** | **Farmers trained in the TP (ToT)** | **Farmers trained by the ToT** | **Total** |
| M’Pessoba (TP) | 10 | 15 | 150 |
| Sirakele | 5 | 10 | 50 |
| Zanzoni | 5 | 10 | 50 |
| Namposela | 5 | 10 | 50 |
| N’Golonianasso | 5 | 10 | 50 |
| Sub total | 30 |  | 350 |
| Grand Total | 380 |

**Inauguration of the Technology Park**

After lunch participants of the meeting travelled to M’pessoba for the inauguration of the technology park initiated by ICRAF, ICRISAT and AVRDC and associates. After visiting the technology parkIP members made few recommendations on the constructed TP as follows:

* strengthening the system of pulleys
* more attachments for the fences
* rebuild the brink of the wells
* strengthen the seals
* extract the embankments
* set concrete at the foot of fences (for the entire periphery)
* digging the wells to reach 15 m according to the contract

These recommendations were meant to be executed within 15 days before a definitive reception of the technology park. Therefore a committee comprising members of ICRAF, ICRISAT, AVRDC, AMEDD, commune mayor, and Agriculture school director was established to oversight the implementation of recommendations made during the visit.

# Bougouni workshop

## Opening session

**Date:** Thursday 21st May 2015 **Venue:** Bougouni District Council **Innovation platform**: Djekafo kene

We followed the same agenda as that of Koutiala IP and the meeting was held in the conference room of the District Council of Bougouni, and facilitated by ICRAF, AMEDD and MOBIOM.

In addition to ICRISAT, ICRAF and AVRDC were present to the meeting, the President of the District Council of Bougouni, representatives of the agricultural extension services, input providers, local NGOs, members of farmers’ organizations and local authorities.

The session of the day started at 9 past 15; with the welcome words of the representative of the President of MOBIOM who welcomed the participants and encouraged this excellent initiative which could enable sustainable agriculture in the District of Bougouni.

The second speaker of the day was the president of the District Council of Bougouni who warmly welcomed the participants and express his gratefulness to the partners that are facilitating the Innovation Platform for the development of agriculture in the District of Bougouni.

After the welcome words of the representative of MOBIOM and the President of the District Council of Bougouni, the agenda of the day was adopted by the participants and the facilitators proceeded to the presentation of all the participants attending the meeting.

After this formalities, the session of the day started with the presentation of partners implementing Africa RISING activities in the district of Bougouni:

## Presentations

* **Presentation Innovation Platform of Bougouni / ICRAF:** the representative of Dr. Binam leading the innovation platform establishment, Mr Diakite started his presentation with a brief history of Innovation Platform and its importance for local development. According to him the Innovation Platform is an arena where all actors intervening in agricultural sector exchange on the constraint and opportunities related to agricultural development.

The presenter argued that the Innovation Platform of Bougouni has been set up after a field survey has been conducted in the Districts of Bougouni to identify the different actors that could influence the development of Agriculture in this district. The last session of the innovation platform was held in Bougouni in December 2014.

The activities planned for 2015 are related to the setting up of an innovation platform in Flola at a communal level and the training of the actors participating to the innovation platform.

* **Testimony of participant farmers’ to Africa RISING activities:**

**Dramane Samake farmer from the village of Sibirila:** Mr Samake commented that he participated to the trials on soya bean, maize and okra intercropping. He insisted on the importance of farmers’ training on new technologies to improve crop productivity locally.

**Baseriba Samake farmer from Dieba:** Mr Samake participated in the trials on improved seed variety, cereal and vegetable intercropping. He emphasized on the quality of the groundnut seed provided and the contribution of these crops to improve nutrition in their village.

**Fourama Diawara farmer from Madina:** Mr Diawara participated to the trials on cereal and vegetables intercropping. He reported that despite the deficit of rainfall in their village, they were able to increase their income through the sales of vegetables and cereals produced with the seeds provided by AVRDC and ICRISAT.

* **Presentation of ICRISAT land and water management program activities’:** The activities implemented by ICRISAT’s Land and Water Management program in 2014 were presented by Dr Birhanu Zemadim. The activities are related to the assessment of groundwater level and land degradation in the target villages of Africa RISNG.

For 2015 there is a plan to establish treatment and control plots to monitor runoff, erosion rate and sediment load.

Dr Birhanu also reported the appointment of a research assistant who will be in charge for Africa RISING activities’ implemented in the Districts of Bougouni and Yanfolila. He encourages all partners to hand over report of their activities to the coordinator who will be located at MOBIOM’s office in Bougouni. He emphasize on the collaboration between partners to achieve the goal of the program.

* **Presentation of ICRAF’s activities on agroforestry:** the activities related to agroforestry were presented by Dr C Dembele. Accordingly in 2013 and 2014 ICRAF has implemented activities to improve agroforestry practices. They have planted grafted and non grafted plants of many tree species including shea, baobab, tamarind, moringa, jujube, gliricidia, *Acacia colei*, and *Piliostigma reticulatum* for intensive fruit, fodder and vegetable production, and along contour bands for soil and water conservation. For 2015 the same activities are planned in the target villages of Africa RISING and the technology parks. Local indigenous tree species will be grafted to improve their productivity.
* **Presentation of AVRDC activities on cereal and legume intensification:** Dr Rouamba presented the activities implemented by AVRDC in 2014 in the target villages of Dieba and Madina were:
* The establishment of cereal legumes trials in the vilages of Dieba and Madina (intercropping of maize and tomato, groundnut and pepper, maize hibiscus, )
* The training of farmers on improved technologies
* The organization of an open farmers’ field day in Madina.

For 2015 the same activity will continue in the target villages. Farmers will be trained in integrated pest management and two master students will do their internship on the program.

Doctor Rouamba also commented on the nutrition activities implemented by AVRDC in the case of the Africa RISING program. According to him the activities were implemented prior to the high malnutrition rate observed in the region of Sikasso despite the leading role of the region in terms of cereals and fruits production.

The objective was to improve the nutrition of infant, breast feeding and pregnant women through training session and demonstrations of nutritious foods derived from crops grown locally.

* **Presentation of ICRISAT’s activities on cereal legume vegetable cropping :**

ICRISAT’s activities implemented in the case of cereal legume vegetable cropping in the target villages were presented by Mary Ollenburger. According to her trials on cereal legume intercropping were established within farmers’ fields in the target villages of Africa RISING (Dieba, Flola, Madina and Sibirila) in 2014.

For 2015 the same activities are planned in the target villages where the trials of last year were established.

**Management and principle of the Technology Park in Flola:** the principle and the functioning of the technology was discussed by Dr Birhanu. The technology Park is a recommendation of the previous assessment made by the donors. The technology park will be used to train farmers on improved agricultural and soil water conservation practices.

To achieve these goals 10 farmers are selected in the village of Flola and they will be trained in the technology park and in return they will train each 15 farmers on the technology they establish in their fields.

Concerning the other Africa RISING villages 5 farmers will be selected for training in the Technology Park and once back to their respective villages they will train 10 farmers on the technology they select during the training of trainers.

## Discussion

After the presentations of CG’s and the testimonial of farmers, the facilitators gave the floor to participants to ask their questions or to comment on presentation made by researchers.

Mr Abou Diallo representing the President of MOBIOM asked a question on the yield in ton/ha of the trials on intercropping established by AVRDC. What are the treatment and how to resolve the lack of water?

To these questions the representative of AVRDC answered that the intercropping of maize (75%) and tomato (25%) was more profitable but the application of fertilizer (compost) vary from among farmers’ fields.

Another participants asked why there is no Innovation Platform in Yorobougoula to which Mr Adama Diakite (ICRAF) that soon they will set up innovation platforms at village level in Flola and may be in Yorobougoula.

**Follow up action plan**

Regarding the questions of participants on the advantages of cereal legume intercropping, Dr Birhanu Zemadim recommend that a session involving all participants of the platform where AVRDC and ICRISAT teams will explain intercropping technology and their results to all the actors during the month of June in Bougouni.

## Inauguration of the technology park in Bougouni district

**Inauguration of the technology parks:** After the lunch the participants to the meeting travelled to Flola for the inauguration of the technology park initiated by ICRISAT AVRDC and ICRAF.

**After visiting the technology park, ICRISAT and associates made some reservations to the representative of the contractor concerning:**

* The cleaning of technology park (clearing the sand left)
* Painting the structure in green
* The establishment of a pulley system on the well
* The construction a basin to store water
* To establish a ladder in the well

These recommendations were meant to be executed in a time limit of 15 days before a definitive reception of the technology park. Therefore a committee comprising members of ICRISAT, ICRAF, AVRDC, village are in charge of following the implementation of the recommendation

# Annexes

## List of participants (Koutiala)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 27 | Dao | Bakary | AMEDD |  | 64090680 |
| 28 | Sagara | Michel | AMEDD |  | 74697320 |
| 29 | Dembele | Ousmane | AMEDD |  | 76147150 |
| 30 | Traore | Salifou | URSCPCV |  | 76191931 |
| 31 | Dao | Fatoumata | URSCPCV |  | 78565381 |
| 32 | Dembele | Souleymane | Sirakele |  | 90075939 |
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| 37 | Traore | Mohamed | AMEDD |  | 63447165 |
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| 39 | Kamate | Jeannette | AMEDD |  | 61146878 |
| 40 | Domele | Solomani | Komiri |  | 65675041 |
| 41 | Coulibaly | Adama | ICRISAT |  |  |
| 42 | Karakodjo | Aboubacar | AVRDC |  |  |
| 43 | Seydou | Diawara | ICRAF |  |  |
| 44 | Bane | Cheick | ICRISAT |  |  |
| 45 | Coulibaly | Malick | AMEDD |  |  |
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## Some pictures of Koutiala workshop



Technology park of Mpessoba

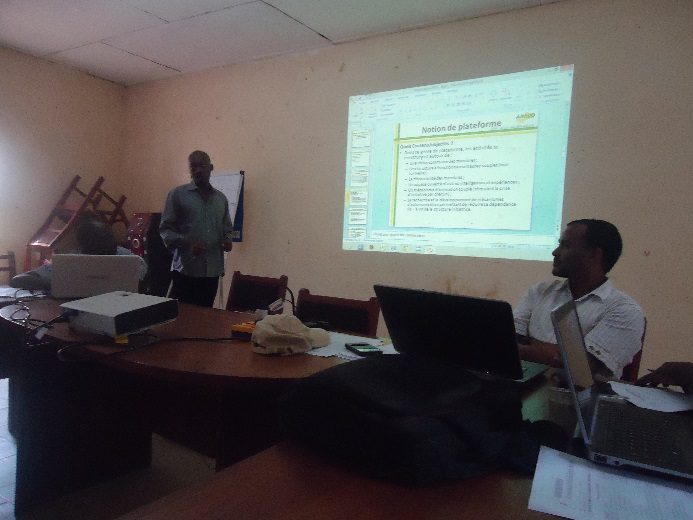




## List of participants (Bougouni)

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| 10 | Samake | Fousseni | Mobiom |  | 73468720 |
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| 22 | Diakite | Kalifa | Jeunes ruraux |  | 66589827 |
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| 24 | Sidibe | Toumani | MOBIOM |  | 63040531 |
| 25 | Kone | Oumar | syndicat des eleveurs |  | 73128414 |
| 26 | Samake | Danseni | Sene deme |  | 79103441 |
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## Some pictures of Bougouni workshop



Technology park of Flola



